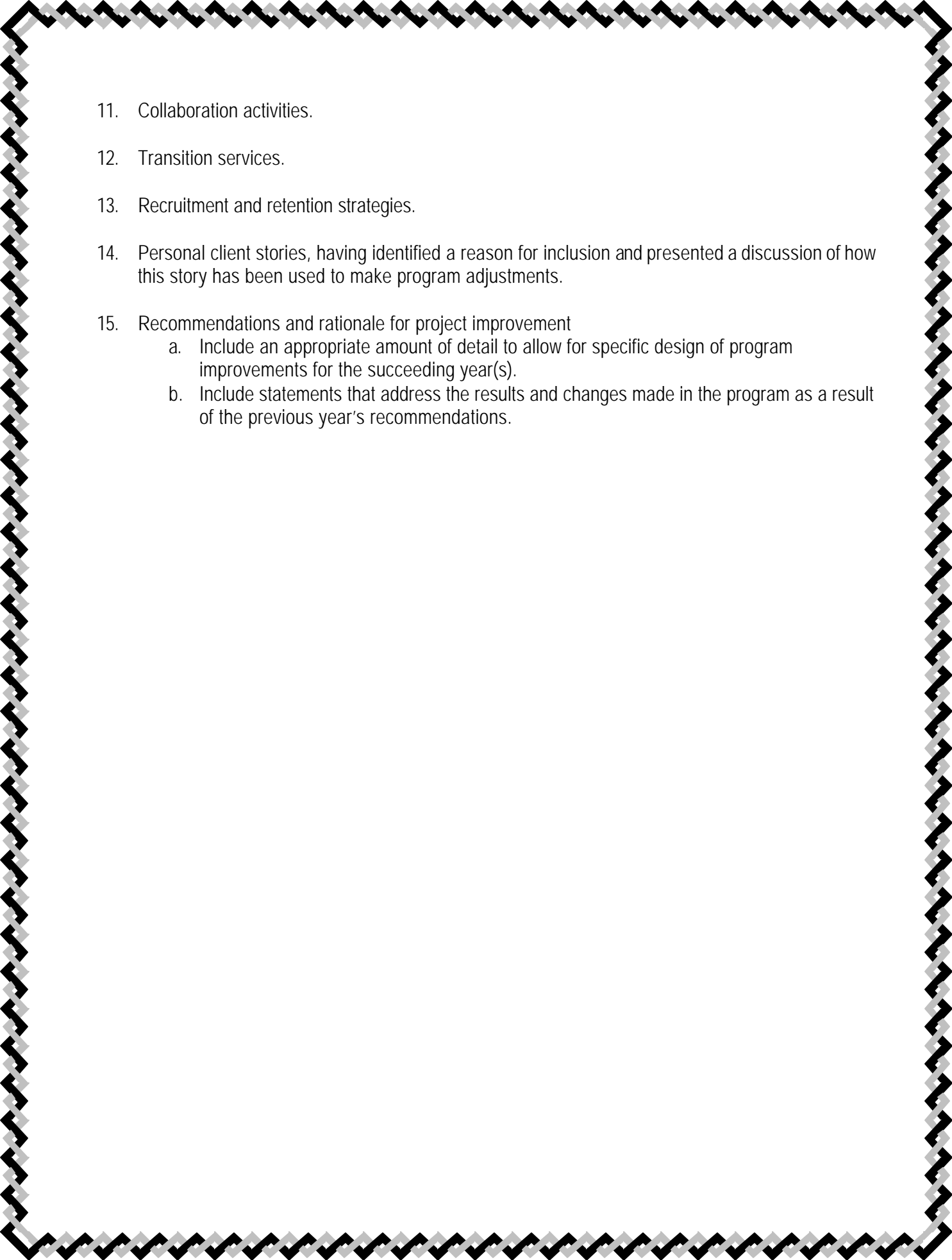# COMMON ELEMENTS FOR LOCAL EVALUATION

Evaluation is an opportunity for Even Start program staff to document what their programs do well, and to learn how to make programs more effective in reaching their goals. Local evaluations are primarily designed for program improvement. Therefore this evaluation should include attention to both the process of operation and the outcomes for participants. The local evaluator and the program coordinator design a plan that determines the role and responsibility for each component of the program evaluation. The following elements are considered essential in order for the plan to result in useful outcomes for program continuous improvement. Projects are encouraged to identify additional components that would be helpful and useful to program staff in meeting the needs of their community and contribute to the success of the families in their program.

1. Essential information on the implementation of the program
    a. Program features such as design, content and organization
    b. Identification of client risk factors
    c. Site(s) identified by programming emphasis or client population
    d. Intensity (program schedule)
    e. Staffing

2. Demographic Data
    a. Gender
    b. Ethnic Background
    c. Employment
    d. Participant involvement in other programs

3. Scope of evaluative information which includes target population, partnership and collaborating organizations, type of program, client outcomes, family constraints and needs.

4. Identification of research-based approach(es) used in program design and delivery.

5. Integration of the four components, emphasizing balance and appropriateness for families.

6. An annual report including data obtained from the use of identified assessment instruments and techniques as identified in the performance indicators.

7. A minimum of six onsite visits for a new relationship (four for continued) with the evaluator taking an active part in the program so they can provide ongoing assistance to the program.

8. Report details
    a. Due date
    b. Format
    c. Required content

9. Attainment of program objectives as set forth in the grant proposal.

10. Program strengths and barriers to success.

11. Collaboration activities.

12. Transition services.

13. Recruitment and retention strategies.

14. Personal client stories, having identified a reason for inclusion and presented a discussion of how this story has been used to make program adjustments.

15. Recommendations and rationale for project improvement
    a. Include an appropriate amount of detail to allow for specific design of program improvements for the succeeding year(s).
    b. Include statements that address the results and changes made in the program as a result of the previous year's recommendations.